

### REMARKS

This amendment is offered in response to the Office Action of January 2, 2004.

The Office Action rejected Claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by the Tsukamoto reference (U.S. Patent No. 5,668,641). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The claimed invention includes a counting means for counting the printer raster number and a timer that measures a required time duration from when print operations start to when the counting means counts the printed raster number. This is quite different from the Tsukamoto reference which discloses neither a counting means for counting printed data amount, such as the printed raster number, nor a timer.

More specifically, the claimed invention calculates printing times based on the printed raster number that is the number of rasters that has already been printed and a time duration that is actually required to print the number of rasters. Again, this is quite different from the Tsukamoto reference, wherein the printing time is calculated based on “the printing time per line” and “the number of frames to be printed, the number of lines to be printed”. Moreover, the Tsukamoto reference fails to disclose how to calculate or otherwise obtain the “printing time per line”.

The claimed invention can very accurately predict the printing time of all printing data, because the printing time is predicted based on the raster number of data actually printed.

As such, the statement of the Office Action are incorrect for the reasons stated above, and the Tsukamoto reference does not disclose the invention recited in Claim 18.

The Office Action rejected Claim 19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the Tsukamoto reference in view of the Beaudet reference (U.S. Patent No. 6,469,795).

The presently claimed invention as per Claim 19 (dependent upon Claim 18) includes (1) "counting means for counting a printed raster number" and (2) "the timer and the predicting means are provided to the computer". Apparently, the Office Action cites the Tsukamoto reference for an alleged disclosure of (1) and cites the Beaudet reference for an alleged disclosure of (2).

However, it is respectfully submitted that the Tsukamoto reference does not disclose a counter. Moreover, the Beaudet reference discloses a scanner 14 with a panel 28 that displays the current status of the job being printed, but it is not disclosed whether the detection means of the current status of the job being printed is provided to the printer 14 or to the RIP 16.

Therefore, even if the Tsukamoto reference were to be combined with the Beaudet reference, the resulting combination would not result in the invention recited in currently pending Claim 19.

In view of the above, each of the claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to early issue.

Respectfully submitted,



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